

We save land.



We save rivers.

Land Stewardship Manager

Job Summary:

The Land Stewardship Manager position brings together many aspects of stewardship - the ecological stewardship activities on properties we help to manage or protect working with landowners, volunteers, and students; the stewardship of conservation easements themselves to help them stand strong in perpetuity; and the stewardship of relationships with people – landowners, trail users, volunteers etc. This hits deep to the core of The Conservation Foundation’s mission to improve the health of our communities by preserving land, protecting rivers and promoting stewardship of our environment.

TCF is seeking an energetic professional that is passionate about our local ecology and igniting that passion in others. Our work ranges from small lots and naturalized detention areas in subdivisions to high quality nature preserves with unique flora and fauna. The Land Stewardship Manager will be ready to take the lead and expand our Stewardship Program, working both doing hands-on restoration with interns, volunteers and landowners, as well as seeking and overseeing qualified contractors to fulfill management obligations on lands we own or hold conservation easements on. This position will also support land preservation efforts in two ways. First, by inventorying new sites, assessing current conditions and restoration potential, and using GIS to document boundaries, conditions and development of management plans. Second, by working with current conservation easements and landowners, completing annual monitoring visits, guiding landowner management efforts, being a resource to easement landowners. The Land Stewardship Manager will be the lead for TCF’s Natural Area Assurance Program, an innovative program working with developers and regulatory agencies to set up long-term, funded management for natural and naturalized areas within new developments. This important work is changing the paradigm on how to set these sites up for long-term success.

Success in this position will require an extensive understanding of flora native to the Chicagoland area, underlying structure of woodlands, prairies and wetlands and how that influences restoration potential. Experience working in high quality natural areas, either professionally or extensively as a volunteer, is a defining attribute for this position. Passion that extends beyond our local ecology to working with people - volunteers, interns, students, landowners etc., is key to meeting the goals of the Stewardship Program.

Position Details:

- Full-Time, exempt, 2-3 Saturday mornings a month required
- The split between field and office activities is about 50/50.
- Based at TCF Headquarters at McDonald Farm in Naperville
- Reports to Vice President of Land & Watershed Programs
- Valid driver’s license and ability to travel to work sites required, mileage compensated at IRS rate
- Salary Range: \$50K-\$60K, with upper level reserved for those with more senior qualifications
- TCF offers excellent benefits, including paid leave, medical, dental, and life insurance, and a retirement match.

Education + Experience: A Bachelor’s Degree in biological, ecological, natural resources or environmental sciences area and at least 8 years of experience with assessing ecological conditions, ecological management, using restoration equipment, and writing management plans. Knowledge of GIS is preferred.



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Duties + Responsibilities:

- Leading Natural Areas Assurance Program
 - * Working with developers and regulatory agency staff to determine fit for program, review of development documents, coordination with engineers and landscape architects, development of supporting documents including baseline documentation reports, management plans and cost estimates.
 - * Acting as Ecological Manager once site is accepted into program
- Leading hands-on restoration in high quality natural areas with assistance from interns, volunteers and landowners.
- Requesting and reviewing proposals from contractors, managing contracts, overseeing their work and tracking completion of tasks to recommend payment of invoices.
- Assessing existing conditions, floral communities, and restoration potential to support development of ecological management plans, baseline documentation reports and land acquisition/conservation easement documents.
- Managing project budgets, and writing and managing grants for ecological management.
- Monitoring conservation easements, assisting easement owners and providing management guidance.
- Working with Volunteer Coordinator to recruit, train, and retain restoration volunteers and expand volunteer restoration opportunities across our region.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Extensive knowledge of local ecology and plant communities of the Chicago Region.
- Strong social and interpersonal skills including the ability to maintain good working relationships with coworkers, landowners, HOA boards, volunteers, local partners and members of the community, including elected officials.
- Excellent writing skills, including experience with writing management plans, grants, contracts and reports.
- Experience leading prescribed burns, certified burn boss preferred.
- Maintain Pesticide Applicators license with at least Right-of-Way or ability to obtain.
- Demonstrated ability to recruit, lead, train and manage volunteers/interns in performing tasks through direct supervision or as a team/project leader.
- Experience working with landowners on acquisitions or conservation easements is preferred.
- Ability to perform heavy lifting of weights up to 50 pounds, work outdoors in all conditions and terrain.

Timeline: Application deadline - by **February 5, 2022**. Estimated start date in March, 2022

The Conservation Foundation is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment where everyone is valued and belongs. We seek to be an organization where each individual thrives and where unique views, beliefs and perspectives are respected and celebrated.

The Conservation Foundation is an equal opportunity employer. All aspects of employment including the decision to hire, promote, discipline, or discharge, will be based on merit, competence, performance, and business needs. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law.

Please email cover letter and resume to:

Dan Lobbes, VP of Land & Watershed Programs
Email: dlobbes@theconservationfoundation.org

